

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 ACDA-05 NIC-01 /072 W

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R 231610Z JAN 75

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 393

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, WB

SUBJECT: FDP ELECTION HOPES

REFS: USBERLIN 123; USBERLIN 2204; USBERLIN 2091

1. BERLIN FDP CHAIRMAN WOLFGANG LUEDER IN PRESS STATEMENT JANUARY 22 REVEALED THAT BOTH HE AND FDP CAUCUS LEADER HERMAN OXFORD WOULD EXPECT BECOME MEMBERS OF SENT SHOULD MARCH 2 ELECTION RESULTS BRING ABOUT SPD-FDP COALITION. LUEDER ADDED THAT OXFORD ALSO WOULD EXPECT TO BE GIVEN POST OF MAYOR (DEPUTY GOVERNING MAYOR) PRESENTLY OCCUPIED BY KURT NEUBAUER. HE ADDED THAT CREATION OF ADDITIONAL MAYORAL POSITION FOR A SOCIAL DEMOCRAT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO FDP, WHILE TWO SENAT SEATS WERE MINIMUM THAT FDP WOULD ACCEPT.

2. AS NOTED IN USBERLIN 2091, FDP HAD BEEN THINKING IN TERMS OF THREE SENAT SEATS IN HOPE PARTY WILL RECEIVE LARGER SHARE OF VOTES THAN IN 1971, WHEN LIBERALS RECEIVED 8.5 PERCENT. CURRENT PREDICTIONS (USBERLIN 123) PUT FDP CLOSER TO 5 PERCENT. AS FAR BACK AS NOVEMBER (USBERLIN 2204), SPD INDICATED THAT COALITION WITH FDP

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WOULD BE POSSIBLE ONLY IF SOCIALIST RECEIVE LESS THAN

ABSOLUTE MAJORITY. AT THIS POINT IN CAMPAIGN, IT APPEARS LIKELY JUDGING FROM POLLS, ETC., THAT SPD WILL NOT RECEIVE 50 PERCENT OF VOTES. IF FDP DOES NOT CLEAR 5 PERCENT HURDLE, HOWEVER, IT WILL NOT BE REPRESENTED IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE. IN THAT CASE, SPD WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE MAJORITY PARTY, AND WOULD FORM NEW SENAT EVEN IF IT RECEIVES LESS THAN 50 PERCENT OF VOTES. (NONE OF OTHER PARTIES NOW CAMPAIGNING -- SEW, BFD, KPD AND KBW -- ARE EXPECTED TO OVERCOME 5 PERCENT HURDLE.)

3. AS MARCH 2 NEARS, FEDERAL FDP IS GOING ALL OUT TO HELP BERLIN PARTY. CHAIRMEN OF SEVERAL FOREIGN LIBERAL PARITES WILL MEET IN BERLIN FEBRUARY 8-9 AT INVITATION FDP NATIONAL CHAIRMAN GENSCHER. FDP CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL MEET IN BERLIN ON FEBRUARY 22 AND ON FEBRUARY 25, FDP BUDESTAG CAUCUS WILL MEET IN BERLIN REICHSTAG. PARTY OBVIOUSLY HOPES THIS LIBERAL PRESENCE IN BERLIN WILL BE INFLUENTIAL WITH VOTERS.

4. COMMENT: LUEDER'S INTEREST IN BECOMING MEMBER OF SENAT COMES AS SOMETHING OF SURPRISE. IT HAD BEEN BELIEVED THAT FOR PERSONAL CAREER REASONS, HE WOULD WANT TO RETAIN HIS POSITION AS JUDGE EVEN IF FDP ENTERED COALITION WITH SPD. HE MAY FEEL THAT HE COULD NOT CONTROL PARTY EFFECTIVELY IF HE REMAINED OUTSIDE AN SPD-FDP COALITION GOVERNMENT. GEORGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY UNITY, ELECTION FORECASTS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975USBERL00134
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750026-0219
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750125/aaaaavte.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 USBERLIN 123, 75 USBERLIN 2204, 75 USBERLIN 2091
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 MAY 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <28 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FDP ELECTION HOPES
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, WB, (LUEDER, WOLFGANG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006